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SENSITIVE
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DEPT FOR EAP/MTS AND EB/IFD/OMA
USDA/FAS/OA BREWER, STOLL
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USDA/FAS/OGA HOUSE, DWYER, ROCKE
USDA/FAS/OSTA BLUM, MACKE, BERMAN, WETZEL
USDA/FAS/OCBD SHEIKH, KREAMER, GROVES
USTR WEISEL, EHLERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Indonesian Deputy Minister of Agriculture Advocates
Closer Agricultural Ties Through Food Security

1.(U) On January 14, 2010 Deputy Chief of Mission Theodore G. Osius met with Dr. Bayu Krisnamurthi, Deputy Minister, Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture to discuss options for greater cooperation in the agricultural sector. Food security presents an opportunity to encourage greater U.S. private sector cooperation. Bayu hopes for greater ties through agricultural education. He also sought ways to resolve outstanding agricultural trade issues, although he acknowledged political limitations.

Food Security -----

2.(U) Dr. Krisnamurthi stated that he wished to establish a mechanism for discussing agricultural issues with the United States. He noted that these discussions could be about bilateral trade, food security, or other ways the United States and Indonesia could collaborate to achieve their "mutual potential" in agriculture. With Dr. Krisnamurthi's encouragement, U.S. Ambassador Cameron Hume will host a food security roundtable on January 26, which will include Indonesian government officials, academia and members of the U.S. private sector, the roundtable will address potential the private sector roles in addressing Indonesia's food security challenges.

13. (U) Following up on a previous suggestion from Dr. Krisnamurthi, the DCM stated that Post would like to hold a joint workshop with Indonesia in late March 2010. The workshop will promote food security through increased capacity in agricultural technology and private investment. The DCM asked that Dr. Krisnamurthi provide Post officials with a point of contact from his office for future coordination and planning activities. Dr. Krisnamurthi stated that his primary responsibilities as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture is to promote investment in Indonesia's agricultural sector has been identified as a top priority for President Yudhoyono's second term.

14. (U) Mr. Krisnamurthi noted that in the 1970s and 1980s, as many as 300 Indonesians received advanced degrees from U.S. Land Grant Universities under a USAID program. He stressed that this program has been critical to Indonesia's food security and agricultural development, as well as fundamental for the United State - Indonesia bilateral relationship.

Bilateral Trade of Agricultural Products -----

¶5. (U) The DCM thanked Dr. Krisnamurthi for the Ministry of Agriculture's November 2009 recognition of the U.S. food safety control system for all fresh foods of plant origin for a two-year period. The DCM stated that this kind of bilateral engagement is critical to solving other outstanding issues in the trade of agricultural products, specifically citing challenges to U.S beef and pork exports to Indonesia. He also requested that the Ministry of Agriculture work with its U.S. interlocutors to resolve trade issues prior to the visit of DUSTR Demetrios Marantis in February 2010.

¶6. (SBU) Dr. Krisnamurthi acknowledged that there are no animal science-based reasons for Indonesia to maintain its ban on U.S. fresh pork and pork products. However, he is aware that it will be politically difficult to change the ban.

¶7. (U) The DCM informed Dr. Krisnamurthi that U.S. officials are concerned that the Ministry of Agriculture has been noticeably absent from recent United States - Indonesia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) discussions. He encouraged the MOA to attend and participate at the next round.

U.S. Agency for International Development Discussion Items

¶8. (U) The USAID Mission Director informed Dr. Krisnamurthi that USAID is planning on a successor program for the Agribusiness Market and Support Activity (AMARTA) in Indonesia, which would have university partnership component. Dr. Krisnamurthi stated that the Ministry of Agriculture is currently developing a new zootic committee, which will focus on other animal health issues, as well as Avian Influenza.

Hume